

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00
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P R 281004Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2191
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 12427

ADDIS PASS DJIBOUTI

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR FR FT
SUBJ: ELYSEE COMMENT ON DJIBOUTI

REF: PARIS 12069

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF APR 27, GISCARD'S
AFRICAN ADVISER, RENE JOURNIAC, EXPRESSED GUARDED
SATISFACTION WITH THE COMPOSITION OF THE SINGLE LIST OF
CANDIDATES SUBMITTED FOR THE MAY 8 FTAI ASSEMBLY ELEC-
TIONS. HE SAID THAT SOMALI PRESSURES ON HASSAN GOULED
SINCE THE PARIS ROUNDTABLE UNFORTUNATELY HAD RESULTED
IN THE EXCLUSION OF ALI AREF AND HIS FOLLOWERS FROM THE
LIST. HOWEVER, THE AFARS ARE REPRESENTED AND THE LIST
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THUS CAN BE CONSIDERED TO BE AT LEAST PARTIALLY
BALANCED. FRENCH FEARS THAT THERE WOULD BE UNBALANCED,
COMPETING LISTS HAD PROVED GROUNDLESS, AT LEAST, AND
FRENCH PLANS TO HOLD ELECTIONS SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE
REFERENDUM HAD PASSED AN IMPORTANT HURDLE
SUCCESSFULLY.

2. THE IMMEDIATE FRENCH WORRY, JOURNIAC CONTINUED, IS THAT THE ETHIOPIANS, UNHAPPY ABOUT THE EXCLUSION OF ALI AREF'S FRIENDS AND THE PRO-SOMALI TILT OF THE LIST, WILL ENCOURAGE THE AFARS TO CREATE INCIDENTS AT THE POLLING PLACES MAY 8, THUS PROVIDING EVIDENCE TO UN, OAU AND ARAB LEAGUE OBSERVERS TO SUBSTANTIATE CHARGES OF UNREPRESENTATIVE ELECTIONS. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE FRENCH TO PROVIDE SECURITY FOR SOME 600 VOTING PLACES, ESPECIALLY THOSE IN THE AFAR HINTERLAND. NONETHELESS, JOURNIAC SAID, THE FRENCH DO NOT ANTICIPATE MAJOR DISTURBANCES AND FEEL THEY CAN COPE WITH WHATEVER MAY ARISE.

3. JOURNIAC AFFIRMED THAT FRANCE REMAINS READY TO CONCLUDE COOPERATION AGREEMENTS WITH THE GOVERNMENT WHICH WILL BE FORMED AFTER THE ELECTIONS, INCLUDING AN ACCORD FOR RETAINING FRENCH TROOPS IN DJIBOUTI, AND BELIEVES THAT THE NEW GOVERNMENT WILL WISH TO SIGN SUCH ACCORDS. IN OTHER WORDS, HE IMPLIED, FRENCH PLANS FOR THE TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENCE ARE STILL ON TRACK.

4. COMMENT: THE VISIT MAY 3 OF SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS TAITTINGER TO ADDIS MAY PROVIDE FURTHER CLUES WHETHER JOURNIAC'S PROCLAIMED OPTIMISM IS JUSTIFIED.
GAMMON

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